



Appropriations Committee Public Hearing on the DSS Budget
2/16/17

Testimony from Nino Kavteladze
Catholic Charities – Archdiocese of Hartford

PLEASE DO NOT SHRED THE SAFETY NET

Good evening honorable members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Nino Kavteladze and I am Primary Case Manager for Safety Net program at Catholic Charities – Archdiocese of Hartford. We work with clients who have exhausted their state benefits and are at risk of losing what little they have. I urge you fully fund the Safety Net Services program, funded through the Safety Net and Community Services lines in the DSS budget. This is a core program to support families facing the many challenges of poverty so that they can remove obstacles to employment and become self-reliant. The Governor's budget eliminates these lines and consolidates funding from the Safety Net and Community Services lines to the Human Service Infrastructure line, which is then reduced in total by 20%.

I would like to share story of one of my client. Single mother of 7 years old girl, who was homeless, was staying with different family members and friends each night was depressed and could not figure out how to put her life together. Since the client was enrolled in the Safety Net program client and her child was enrolled in mental health services, the client was able to secure a part time job as a school bus monitor and now is working towards security guard certification. Client has become energetic and is doing everything to become self-sufficient. The client also has secured affordable housing and the Safety Net Program is in the process to assist client with security deposit and first month rent payment. I am working with client and teach her how to budget income to be able to become self-sufficient so that the family can have a better future.

This is a story of one client. We have thousands of clients, including single mothers and fathers who tremendously need our assistance to have safe housing and reliable jobs.

Please save the Safety Net program and do not reduce its funding.